



WEED & SEED **INSITES**
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Strong Kids, Strong Families, For a Ready Future

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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Executive Office for Weed and Seed
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531
Phone: 202-616-1152
Fax: 202-616-1159
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows



On the Cover

This issue pays tribute to the DEFY Program. The cover photo shows young participants at the Annapolis DEFY Camp.



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Visit www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/abouteow.htm to learn about the functions of EOWS and its staff and www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/insites.htm for information on submitting articles and comments.

FROM THE U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

letter

I wish to extend a warm welcome to participants of the National Weed and Seed Conference, which is being hosted for the first time in New Mexico, also known as the “Land of Enchantment.” It is expected that the conference will attract more than 1,000 participants from across the Nation who I hope will enjoy a truly enchanting experience while visiting our State. It was a proud moment for us when we were chosen to host this important national event because Weed and Seed has been a bedrock initiative in this district’s overall drug interdiction and community revitalization strategy.



New Mexico has a population of approximately 1.8 million including a rich blend of several cultures and is considered a minority majority State. Our State has 22 Native American tribes—19 pueblos and 3 tribes. New Mexico’s first Weed and Seed site was established at the Pueblo of Laguna in 1997 as one of two Indian Country pilot sites.

This year’s Weed and Seed Conference will be held in Albuquerque, the State’s largest city and the location of two urban Weed and Seed sites. The city’s southeast neighborhoods of Trumbull and La Mesa joined to form an official Weed and Seed site in 1998. Under the leadership of the Albuquerque Police Department, and with the support of their Federal partners, a trend of gang violence and drug trafficking that had nearly paralyzed these communities was reversed. I encourage conference participants to tour these vibrant neighborhoods which, after 5 years of the intense and successful application of a Weed and Seed strategy, now reflect a more secure environment for families and for related services, home improvement, and economic growth. Our district has also received initial site approval for a coalition of neighborhoods on the west side of the Rio Grande in Albuquerque and for the northern New Mexico community of Española.

Based on their knowledge of the success of Trumbull/La Mesa, these two new sites have also resolved to apply the Weed and Seed strategy to improve conditions in their areas that are heavily affected by crime.

There is an official Weed and Seed site located in the southern New Mexico city of Las Cruces which also encompasses a neighborhood once dominated by drug traffickers and violent crime. Led by a dedicated group of Community Policing Officers from the Las Cruces Police Department, and using Weed and Seed and other leveraged State and local funds and volunteers, the neighborhood took a dilapidated former crackhouse and turned it into a model, youth-oriented, community center in the city.

Again, I hope that all participants will enjoy the beautiful city of Albuquerque and its various attractions during the conference. From everyone in my office, “Bienvenidos a Nuevo Mexico.”

David C. Iglesias
United States Attorney
District of New Mexico

Weeding and Seeding Against Terrorism

Lt. Kevin Yorke, New York City Police Department

The attacks on September 11, 2001, fundamentally changed the way we view our safety and security. Suddenly, communities are faced with threats that before September 11 were unthinkable. In the past year, the terms “bioterrorism,” “weapons of mass destruction,” “terrorist sleeper cells,” and “color-coded alert system” have become part of our vocabulary. The fear and threats of future terrorist attacks have become real and affect our everyday lives. In the face of this challenge, Weed and Seed sites are asking what can be done to better protect our country, communities, and families against possible terrorist attacks.

Fortunately, the Weed and Seed strategy, by its very nature and design, equips communities with some of the essential elements for establishing an effective antiterrorism program. Cooperation, organization, and involvement, the same basic principles that form the cornerstones of the Weed and Seed philosophy and are so effective in reducing crime, can be used to protect a community against terrorist attacks.

Cooperation

The threat of terrorism that confronts us is a complex problem that no one agency or community can deal with alone. It is going to take all of us working together to prevent terrorism. And the term “all of us” does not only refer to public safety agencies and Federal, State, and local governments. It means every community, neighborhood, and block, right down to the families and individuals.

People who live in successful Weed and Seed neighborhoods know the value of cooperation and that engagement in many collaborative efforts is a vital part of the Weed and Seed philosophy. The task force concept of

working together combines the best attributes of different agencies and resources.

Cooperation also means communication and education. In the months immediately following September 11, law enforcement authorities were flooded with calls from concerned citizens who wanted to report suspicious people and circumstances. Educating people on how to report suspicious people and events is one of the best ways to prevent criminal activity.

Organization

A tremendous amount of planning and organizing needs to be done to address the threat of terrorism. Consider, for example, what would happen if a terrorist attack took place during school hours in or near your community. What plans would your community and schools have in place to ensure the safety of the children at school and deal with the crush of anxious parents who would arrive there looking for their children? Thinking about these issues before they occur and planning for them are vital parts of crisis management. Establishing gathering points, safe havens, and evacuation routes is essential. Organizing and planning are not only vital at every level of government but also right down to the family and individual.

Involvement

Various programs enable volunteers to participate in homeland security efforts in their local communities. The Citizen Corps offers several programs that can be easily assimilated into existing Weed and Seed efforts. These include the following:

- **Neighborhood Watch**—This program has been around a long time because it works. Along with being a highly effective way to prevent crime, it can also serve as a viable

way to detect and prevent terrorism. No one knows your community better than you do. Calling in tips and leads to law enforcement, being vigilant, and knowing how and where to report suspicious people or circumstances can help prevent a terrorist strike.

- **Volunteers in Police Service**—This program incorporates citizen volunteers in the activities of local law enforcement agencies to free sworn officers from duties that can be performed by trained volunteers.
- **Medical Reserve Corps**—This program allows a community to tap into retired health care professionals who can augment a community’s local medical resources in an emergency.
- **Community Emergency Response Teams**—This program trains volunteers in crisis planning and emergency management. The training allows local communities to develop some self-sufficiency in responding to local disasters and other emergencies.

Sites can request assistance from EOWS in explaining these options by calling 202-616-1152 and asking for their program manager or Gary Clawson.

Remembrance

We need to always remember the people who gave their lives on September 11. We can honor their memory by taking advantage of the opportunities and resources that are available, thinking about the issues, getting involved, and working together to identify problems and develop solutions. I urge you to take advantage of the opportunities for cooperation and involvement that are available before something like September 11 happens again. 🏠

Volunteers in Police Service

Vincent Talucci, Project Director, and Nancy Kolb, Deputy Project Director, Volunteers in Police Service Program, International Association of Chiefs of Police

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the demands on State and local law enforcement multiplied dramatically. Increasingly, agencies are turning to civilian volunteers to free up front-line officers working to make communities safer. The Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) program provides support and resources for agencies interested in developing or enhancing a volunteer program and for citizens who want to volunteer.

VIPS is one component of the USA Freedom Corps. Launched by President George W. Bush in his 2002 State of the Union address, USA Freedom Corps is an effort to foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility, building on the generous spirit of the American people. This initiative promotes volunteerism with the message that, "Everyone can do something."

Citizen Corps programs are part of the USA Freedom Corps initiative and share the common goal of helping communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to crime, natural disasters, and other emergencies. VIPS and Neighborhood Watch are two USA Freedom Corps programs that fall under the Citizen Corps umbrella. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is managing and implementing the VIPS program in partnership with and on behalf of the White House's USA Freedom Corps Office and the U.S. Department of Justice.

The VIPS program strives to

- Learn about promising practices being used in VIPS programs and

share this information with law enforcement agencies that want to expand or improve their programs.

- Increase the use of volunteers in existing programs.
- Help citizens learn about and get involved in VIPS programs in their communities.

The program's ultimate goal is to support and supplement resource-constrained law enforcement agencies and professionals through the use of civilian volunteers. The mission of this national initiative to help State and local law enforcement agencies is given on www.policevolunteers.org. The Web site serves as a gateway to information for both law enforcement agencies and citizens interested in law enforcement volunteer programs.

What Citizen Volunteers Can Do

Law enforcement volunteer programs are not designed to replace sworn or civilian personnel. Rather, volunteers are used to supplement and enhance existing or envisioned functions to allow law enforcement professionals to do their job in the most effective manner. Volunteers have proven to be a valuable resource, performing such diverse and supportive functions as

- Monitoring parking meters.
- Providing clerical and data support.
- Planning special events.
- Maintaining police vehicles.
- Participating in search and rescue teams.
- Writing grant proposals.
- Developing software applications and other technology.
- Doing research.
- Providing crime analysis.



Fresno, California, Police Department Citizens at Patrol Induction ceremony.

- Conducting checks on homes of residents away on vacation.

These activities complement other volunteer and community programs such as Reserve Officer programs, internship programs, citizen academies, Law Enforcement Explorers, Neighborhood Watch, and citizen advisory boards. These volunteer programs can make a significant difference in police agency capacity. As Attorney General Ashcroft stated, "Volunteers can assist police in performing routine duties that are necessary to the efficient operation of their department. Though the work may not be glamorous, it is essential."

Partnerships between neighborhood residents and programs such as the Weed and Seed initiative have shown that it is much easier for police to succeed against criminals with the active participation of community residents. Many VIPS volunteers find that they are less fearful of being victimized as they reclaim their communities from the criminal element.

Resources for Law Enforcement Agencies

The VIPS program is building an online database of existing law enforcement volunteer programs at www.policevolunteers.org. More than 250 programs have registered. The database summarizes these programs and provides sample resources

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 such as policies, procedures, forms, and training materials for law enforcement agencies. The database is also a resource for persons interested in volunteering in their community.

The national VIPS program also provides support to police agencies interested in starting a volunteer program. To facilitate replication of VIPS in other communities, IACP is

- Developing a comprehensive resource guide that will outline a series of best practices.
- Developing a technical assistance component to help local agencies determine their volunteer needs and design a program that will effectively meet those needs.
- Creating model police-based volunteer policies and programs.
- Establishing mentoring relationships between agencies with

How To Volunteer

If you are interested in volunteering with your local law enforcement agency, check the VIPS Web site to see if it has a registered program. If your local agency is not listed, it does not necessarily mean that it does not have a program. Not all agencies have had the opportunity to register. Please contact your local agency (police or sheriff's department, State police, or other agency) to find out if it has a volunteer program.

If there is a local volunteer program, let the volunteer coordinator know about www.policevolunteers.org so he or she can register the program with VIPS. If there is not a program in place, let them know about the resources available through VIPS. This initiative, together with the other USA Freedom Corps programs, can enhance a local law enforcement agency's homeland security efforts and create a safer America.

well-established programs and agencies that are just getting started.

Policing Institutes of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. 

- Facilitating regional training programs at the Regional Community

Save the Date!

Fifth National Weed and Seed Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 25–28, 2003

Working Together Works

The agenda will include learning labs, exhibit hall, plenary sessions, and workshops.

More information about the conference can be found on the EOWS Web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows.



East Point Youth Alternative Intervention Program*

East Point, Georgia's Youth Alternative Intervention Program (YAIP) is an intervention program that addresses the needs of troubled youth by establishing effective and efficient remedies for changing their patterns of delinquent behavior. The program is an initiative of the East Point Police Department's Weed and Seed program.

YAIP is an alternative to incarceration as well as a preventive measure that attempts to minimize and weed out juvenile crime and delinquency. The program is a combination of boot camp, Big Brother/Big Sister approach, academics, and methods of discipline such as physical training and drill instruction. YAIP partners with local schools, the juvenile justice system, United Way, and several State agencies.

The program measures its effectiveness by tracking the participants' progress during and after completion of the program through the department's mentorship program. Program officers are responsible for communicating with parents/guardians and school officials on the progress of each participant.

YAIP's objectives are

- To provide an alternative solution for parents who have unsuccessfully sought remedies through the juvenile justice system.
- To minimize the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention.
- To redirect efforts to responsible strategies.
- To minimize failure to appear and incidents of delinquent behavior through mentorship and constructive action.

YAIP requires that

- The child is between the ages of 10 and 16.
- The child's parent is a resident of the city of East Point or that the child has committed a crime there.
- The child attends a school in East Point.

In addition, the child can be referred by the Fulton County Department of Family and Children Services. If the basic requirements are met, a parent or legal guardian can place the child in the program if the child is unruly, a runaway, a truant, or a curfew violator. With the concurrence of school officials, a child may also be placed in this program in lieu of being suspended from school.

The program is designed to redirect youth before they get in real trouble with the law. Its goal is to reinforce the qualities needed to get troubled youth back on the right path to maturing into respectful, law-abiding citizens.

If the child successfully completes the program, no juvenile complaints will be forwarded to the Fulton County Juvenile Court. Continuation of unruly behavior and committing other status violations or violent acts are grounds for immediate expulsion from the program and transfer of the child's case to the Fulton County Juvenile Court.

Parents are required to sign their children into the program on Saturdays at 7:45 a.m. and pick them up in the afternoon. The program runs 12 weeks and perfect attendance is mandatory.

Youth participating in the program are evaluated each week by a program

officer. Program staff consist of police officers, fire department personnel, professional volunteers, parents, citizens, and college interns who volunteer their time and services.

The child must complete each week's activities to graduate from the program. Upon graduation, the child receives a certificate and program T-shirt and qualifies for membership in the YAIP Counsel. ■

Basic Components of the Program

- Judicial Review (courtroom activity).
- Behavior Modification (discipline).
- Mentoring (Big Brother/Big Sister concept).
- Physical Exercise.
- Drill Instruction (boot camp concept).
- Classroom Instruction.
- Labor Consciousness.
- Peer Group Sessions.
- Peer Court Sessions.
- Parent/Child Group Conference Sessions.
- Parent Conference Sessions.
- Child Conference Sessions.
- Child Disciplinary Counseling Sessions.
- Consequences 101 (scare straight sessions).
- Career Day.
- Graduation.
- Youth Mentorship Alliance.

**Text was adapted with permission from the YAIP Web site: www.eastpointpolice.org/YouthAltProgram.htm.*

U.S. Navy Celebrates Decade of DEFY

Ensign Paul Noel, DEFY Public Affairs Officer

This year the Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) program celebrates 10 years of substance abuse prevention among America's youth. The theme of the anniversary celebration is "DEFY: A Decade of Delivery."

"Over the past 10 years, this program has delivered on its motto of 'Strong Kids, Strong Families, For a Ready Future,'" said the Navy's DEFY Program Manager Tim Bentley.

DEFY is a two-phased prevention program for 9- to 12-year-old youth. It deters at-risk behaviors by giving youth the tools they need to resist drugs and develop positive social skills. The science-based curriculum incorporates key characteristics of many successful substance abuse prevention programs.

The Secretary of the Navy initiated the DEFY program in 1993 at two sites—one at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, and the other at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Over the past decade, the Navy entered into partnerships with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the U.S. Department of the Air Force to extend the reach of DEFY. The Marine Corps and the Army National Guard also have proved to be great partners for DEFY. DOJ's Executive Office for Weed and Seed imported

the DEFY program in 1996 to serve primarily inner-city youth. Four years later, the Air Force, along with the other branches of the military, also began delivering the drug-free message to its young dependents through DEFY. "This year, the three departments will be operating more than 180 DEFY programs around the globe," Bentley said. "DEFY will reach over 5,000 kids this year alone."

The Navy kicked off its 10th anniversary celebration last month at its annual training conference in Reno, Nevada. Guest speakers included Maj. Gen. Jack Davis, Deputy Commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Atlantic. The general became the first director of DEFY while he was serving as the director of the Navy's Drug Demand Reduction Task Force.

The conference ended with a concert by the Reserve Generation Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve, which provides free concerts with a drug-free message. DEFY invited the band to perform as an example to its programs of the type of events that are available for youth activities.

In the past decade, more than 30,000 youth have graduated from the DEFY program. Bentley said the program's success and popularity are growing every year. "This year, we expect the DEFY program to be offered at 50

Navy and Marine Corps bases around the world," he said. "That represents a 56-percent increase over the past 2 years."

Bentley said he hopes to see DEFY offered in all branches of military services within the next

decade. In addition, he would like to achieve opportunities for the program to reach the Nation's civilian youth through new partnerships and alliances on the community level. "Our partnership with DOJ has been very valuable," he said. "It is responsible for the very successful expansion and popularity in the community. Based on the image DOJ has helped us build, we should have no problem in continuing the expansion of this program long into the future."

DEFY has remained effective over the past decade by delivering an up-to-date curriculum that teaches drug information and refusal skills, as well as general communication, problem-solving, and decisionmaking skills. Bentley said the program materials and lessons are constantly reviewed to remain current. "The curriculum is well established to cover the basics, but we review the course materials every year," he said. "We've also added a continuing study that should provide solid proof of what we know anecdotally—that DEFY makes a difference." The initial study was conducted by Caliber and Associates of Fairfax, Virginia, and included surveys of the program's youth, parents, and adult volunteers. The surveys are now a permanent part of the DEFY program in the military and are tabulated each year by the Air Force.

Bentley said the only thing that has been more important than the proven curriculum is the people who offer their time to teach that curriculum. "The reason DEFY has been around for 10 years is the hard work that everyone has put into the program," he said. "It's their dedication that has kept it going."

To learn more about the Navy's implementation of the DEFY program, visit its Web site at www.hq.navy.mil/defy.



Learning values at DEFY camp in Annapolis, Maryland.

DEFY: 2002 Summer Camp Recap

The Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) program emphasizes drug prevention skills, conflict resolution, goal setting, life opportunities, gang prevention, physical fitness, nutrition, and teamwork. DEFY was designed and evaluated by the U.S. Navy Drug Demand Reduction Task Force and consists of two phases. Phase I is a 5-day residential summer leadership course for 9- to 12-year-old youth. Phase II is a 9-month mentorship program for Phase I graduates and is designed to reinforce lessons covered during the first phase. Below is a look at some of the DEFY activity that took place in 2002.

Philadelphia Weed and Seed Holds Sixth Annual DEFY Camp

The Philadelphia Weed and Seed Program held its sixth annual DEFY Camp, July 22–26, 2002. Forty-six youth from North and West Philadelphia attended the camp. At first the youth were apprehensive, not knowing what to expect, but after the first day everything fell into place. The youth had a great time getting to know one another and participating in workshops and team-building activities.

Representatives from the State Attorney General's Office, District Attorney's Office, and the Mayor's Office of Community Service conducted workshops on drug and alcohol abuse and the importance of getting a good education. A police officer from the Philadelphia Police Department and from the Philadelphia Housing Authority spent the week with the youth enforcing the workshops' messages. Several teenagers from the community served as camp counselors.

DEFY: In Defense of Connecticut's Children

Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia, Drug Demand Reduction Program

In 2002, the Connecticut National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction Program (DDRP) was dynamic,

dedicated, original, outreaching, and a force multiplier in Connecticut's strategy to keep children from taking drugs and participating in risky and violent behaviors. DDRP conducted three residential DEFY programs in summer 2002 at Camp Rowland in Niantic. Weed and Seed sites in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Norwalk, and Stamford participated. In total, 175 youth and adults/mentors attended.

All communities in Connecticut benefit from this program as youth from Weed and Seed sites become motivated and are molded into good citizens. Many of the youth who have graduated from the program have experienced improved grades in school and have been inspired to achieve excellence. Additionally, they are less prone to violence, drug use, and truancy.

The benefit to National Guardsmen who participate in DDRP is more intangible. The satisfaction of helping youth and watching them grow into responsible adults cannot be measured by ordinary standards. It is safe to say, however, that Connecticut receives many benefits from the adults these children grow up to be. There has also been renewal of commitment by individual guardsman to their unit, community, and the youth they influence after their encounter with DDRP.

If your community organization, educational institution, or National Guard unit would like to become involved in DDRP, please contact Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia or Master Sgt. Melissa Lata at 860-493-2724.



DEFY youth and counselor explore a base helicopter.

Macon/Robins Air Force Base DEFY

For the third year in a row, from June 10–18, 2002, the Robins Air Force Base, the Macon Police Department, the Macon Weed and Seed, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Georgia sponsored a unique DEFY summer camp for youth. The 40 campers included 20 Air Force dependents and 20 youth from Macon Weed and Seed.

The challenges of keeping two funding streams separate and ensuring that U.S. Department of Justice campers and U.S. Department of Defense campers received identical clothing, supplies, and opportunities were worth the effort. The children blended well together in their teams because of the efforts of nearly 50 volunteers from the base and the police department.

Another key to the camp's success was the full day spent at a local ropes course. The morning began with exercises to learn more about one another, to develop trust in one another, and to work together as a team. The culmination of the day was a high, multi-vine rope walk in which two people (sometimes two campers, sometimes one camper and one mentor, sometimes two mentors) walked across a rope suspended 30 feet in the air, between two poles, using ropes or "vines" hanging at spaced intervals. The exercise required the two walkers to work together. It also inspired the rest of the group to stand below and cheer them to give the walkers the confidence to make it across at a frightening height.

Each day, undeterred by post-9/11 glitches at the gate, the camp began with physical fitness training followed by breakfast and then class time with the DEFY curriculum, which was taught by staff members. Afternoons were spent touring the base, bowling, and swimming.

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Saturday afternoon was spent at Galaxy Quest, a local arcade, where everyone enjoyed pizza, games, and go-carts.

Valdosta/Moody Air Force Base DEFY

The July heat of south Georgia did not wilt the enthusiasm of the campers or mentors of Valdosta Weed and Seed and Moody Air Force Base's fifth annual DEFY camp. It merely called for more water breaks and a slight adjustment of the schedule so that tours and outside activities were held in the mornings and classes and inside activities were held in the afternoons.

Each morning at 7:30 a.m., when the "big blue bus" rolled into Valdosta's Weed and Seed area to pick up the 24 campers, they were all there anxiously awaiting its arrival. When they pulled onto the base, 10 mentors were waiting to greet them. Eight more mentors were busy preparing their breakfasts. Then their 15 team leaders took over and helped with classwork, and provided encouragement and fun.

During the week, the youth successfully completed a low ropes course designed to develop teamwork and build self-confidence. They toured the 820th Security Force Group and enjoyed a demonstration by the bomb/drug/attack dog unit. A



Students and mentors enjoying Macon's Camp DEFY.

thunderstorm kept them from a much anticipated afternoon at the pool, but the ever resourceful staff took them bowling instead and no one seemed too disappointed.

Each afternoon, the campers attended a retreat where military mentors taught them how to stand at parade rest and attention and to respect our flag. The youth also gained an understanding of the true meaning of patriotism and service to our country from an outstanding group of military and law enforcement role models.

Albany/Marine Corps Logistics Base DEFY

Cpl. Joshua Bozeman

By the end of DEFY camp on July 13, 2002, youth from Albany, Georgia, had learned as much about life in the U.S. Marine Corps as they had about drugs and gangs. Despite the July heat, the campers eagerly practiced military formations and drills each day, proudly drinking from the military issue canteens they wore on their waists.

Personnel from Albany's Marine Corps Logistics Base and the Albany Police Department provided just the right balance of instruction and discipline and fun to keep the campers coming back for more all week long. Dodgeball was the favorite pastime when the pool was closed and team competition during class time kept all youth active.

"The camp gives children an opportunity to learn while having fun," said Cpl. Kinshishi Young, School Resource Officer for the Albany Police Department.



Classroom work and fun at Albany DEFY camp.

"This will help them remember and make them more excited about learning."

The camp was not all fun and games, however. DEFY counselors taught participating youth about the dangers of drugs, gangs, and violence. The DEFY program targets moral character and physical fitness in a way similar to the way that the Marine Corps uses.

"What's nice about this program is that it emphasizes citizenship and morality core values, as we would call them, and ties them in with the drugs and physical education," said Capt. Angela B. Wissman, base Defense Counsel and Military Coordinator for DEFY camp. She noted that drug problems are relatively common in Albany because of its location on a main traffic route between Florida and Atlanta, just off I-75.

Offering positive role models for youth to emulate was one of the methods camp counselors used to teach core values. One of the counselors, Denise Williams, was a student of the DEFY program a few years ago and her appreciation for what she learned at camp helps her to teach the next group of campers.

On the final day of camp, parents and dignitaries were invited to a transition ceremony run entirely by the campers. Lt. Gen. Gary S. McKissock spoke at the graduation ceremony. Then, the campers heard the true story of a

teenager who ruined his and many other lives when he got involved with drugs and alcohol in order to be accepted by an older boy. One of the staff members explained how the teenager murdered his father during an armed robbery at the encouragement of the older boy. She told them how the older teen only served 14 years in prison while the younger one is still in prison after 25 years and pointed out how much of life he has missed.

Hopefully, the campers got the message. “I don’t take drugs,” said 9-year-old Josh Flickinger. “The only drugs I take are good drugs, not bad drugs like cigars and marijuana.”

Athens/U.S. Navy Supply Corps School

The U.S. Navy Supply Corps School in Athens, Georgia, began its yearlong DEFY program last June. Designated a Weed and Seed program, the school’s goal is to teach life skills to children from families in areas impoverished by high rates of drug use, alcohol use, and crime. The Navy has been sponsoring the program in Athens with the Clarke County Police Department since 1999.

Phase I of the program was a summer camp that lasted from June 24–28, 2002. It began with a welcome dinner for more than 20 children ages 9 to 12 and was hosted at the base education center. Parents, campers, and siblings as well as staff and volunteers from the school and police department attended. After the dinner, campers and their families were given a tour of the school grounds to see firsthand some of the facilities that would be used during the program, including the gym, picnic area, and pool.

Campers soon learned that their days were going to be busy. Chief Sidney Dawson, the camp coordinator, and a team of 25 staff and students scheduled, coordinated, and monitored the

program. Events and activities included social skills building, information on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, discussions about peer pressure, and a physical fitness routine. The highlights of the week included a trip to the county jail to impress on youth the consequences associated with poor decisionmaking, a visit to Stone Mountain, and a daily afternoon splash in the pool. Camp culminated with a small graduation ceremony held in conjunction with an end-of-camp cookout by the pool.

“The week was definitely an eye opener for many of us,” said Chief Dawson. “I am optimistic that the seeds we planted in the lives of our young campers will one day bring forth a good harvest.”

Phase II of the program began in August 2002. Staff assigned as mentors for the duration of the year continue to meet with the youth one Saturday a month. ■

Commitment Steps to Becoming a Weed and Seed DEFY Site—Summer 2003

- **Ensure that funds have been approved as part of your 2002 grant application.** Interested sites that did not include a budget for DEFY 2003 summer camp in their 2002 grant application may submit a request for a “budget adjustment.” The request must be approved by the steering committee and submitted to the Executive Office for Weed and Seed program manager for approval.
- **Designate a DEFY coordinator.** The DEFY coordinator should be on the staff of the Weed and Seed site or the grantee agency (e.g., police department, city employee, Federal Government).
- **Find a military partner.** A military partner is necessary to keep the military character of the DEFY program. Phase I of the program (the summer leadership camp) should take place at a military facility and the grantee/site must ensure in advance that the selected partner is willing to provide a suitable place for the children to have classes and playtime. If you cannot find a military partner, please call Louise Lucas (see below).
- **Execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU).** The MOU is a signed agreement between the grantee site and the military partner that clearly delineates each entity’s role and responsibility in the planning and implementation of the DEFY program. Sites implementing DEFY must deliver the DEFY Youth Curricula (Phases I and II) as presented.
- **Discuss funding with the grantee’s budget office.** Beginning with summer 2003, grant funds may be used to implement DEFY. Consult with your fiscal officer regarding payment of proposed expenditures because many of the program expenses are incurred before implementation of the program.

For more information, contact the EOWS DEFY Program Manager Louise Lucas at 202–616–3454, by e-mail at lucas@ojp.usdoj.gov, or visit the EOWS Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows.

Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Weed and Seed Celebrates Success

Rev. Jesse C. Turner, Pine Bluff Weed and Seed Coordinator

Pine Bluff Weed and Seed participants celebrated their community during the Second Annual University Park Community Fair on October 2, 2002. Held on the campus of Dollarway Junior High School, the fair drew 600 people and nearly 200 of them were youth. The theme for this year's event was "In Gear for Safety."

Dollarway students in grades 3 to 6 were asked to draw posters using this year's theme. Nearly 60 students participated in the contest and all received a Weed and Seed T-shirt. Winners received a \$50 savings bond.

Residents took advantage of safety information, health screenings, job applications, and other important services provided by Weed and Seed partners. The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff shared educational opportunities and the Pine Bluff S.A.F.E. Team and Neighborhood Watch program gave tips on home and community safety. Throughout the day, the Pine Bluff Police Department conducted the Morgan Nick Photo ID Program for children.

Following the morning orientation about services provided by Weed and Seed, a fashion show was presented by the Jefferson County Workforce Alliance and Neighbor to Neighbor, Inc. It provided selected residents, who were identified by local nonprofit organizations as individuals in need of assistance, with clothing for job interviews. The free clothing was made available so that they would not have to turn down an interview for employment because they had nothing nice to wear.



Pine Bluff poster contest participants wearing their Weed and Seed T-shirts.

Because more than half of the households in the Weed and Seed area earn less than \$15,000 a year, the community fair included a job fair with several company representatives on hand with job applications. Local banks also placed representatives at the fair to inform residents of services that are available to help them purchase homes or open savings accounts, and Consumer Credit offered help with credit repair.

The Weed and Seed partners for the fair included the Jefferson Comprehensive Care Systems, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Economic Research Department, Dollarway School District and Dollarway Cheerleaders, Consumer Credit, Good Faith Fund, Lenders Mortgage, Simmons



McGruff helps participants celebrate.

First National Bank, Pine Bluff Economic and Community Development, Jefferson County Workforce Alliance, Southern Arkansas Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Community Development Corporation, Pathfinders and Pine Bluff Nursing Homes, Razorback Homes, Jefferson Area Vocational Center, Literacy Council of Jefferson County, Jefferson County Drug Task Force, Electrolux Company, Community Resource Center, and the Pine Bluff Fire and Police Departments. 🏠

Weed and Seed Helps Make the Dream of Home Ownership Come True in Oklahoma City*

Ed Martin, Weed and Seed Coordinator

The Alexanders

The American dream of home ownership became a reality for one Oklahoma City couple. Ron and Sharon Alexander now own their own home thanks to the Neighborhood Services Organization (NSO) of the United Methodist Church and the city of Oklahoma.

With funding from an Oklahoma City Community Development Block Grant, NSO completed six homes in the 3200 block of Land Avenue, in the city's Rockwood Weed and Seed area. "Without the support of the Oklahoma City Planning Department, this wouldn't have been possible," said Program Developer John Agnitsch.

The Alexanders were the first family to move into one of these homes. The homes range from 1,000 to 1,156 square feet and, thanks to Oklahoma Gas & Electric (OG&E), are energy efficient. The loan payment and utilities run between \$350 and \$400 a month. NSO partnered with Oklahoma City, OG&E, and Union Bank to help Weed and Seed residents purchase these homes.

The Alexanders had a tough time getting to where they are today. Ron had grown up in the Rockwood area, and he and Sharon had just relocated back

to Oklahoma City when Ron suffered the first of three heart attacks. Sharon, who was pregnant with their daughter, went looking for public assistance because Ron was unable to work. The Alexanders got some assistance with utilities through Catholic Organizations. It was there that they stumbled on Catholic Charities and Beth Edwards.

"We had a caseworker. Her name was Beth and she was the best," said Sharon. Beth asked the Alexanders about their goals. "We had several goals. One was to get more education so we wouldn't have to ask for help, but our number one goal was to own our own home," Sharon said.

"It was no more than 4 days after we mentioned to Beth that we would like to own a home that she came to us with the information on the NSO program," Ron said. "She told us not to sit down with it, act on it."

"When I heard about the Home Ownership Program, I immediately thought of the Alexanders," Beth said. "They were great clients from the beginning. They were ready to do what it took to get out of their situation."

The next step was to contact Jim Miller with Remax Advantage who got the ball rolling. "We went over the floor plan and they were interested," Miller said. "This is a wonderful program, to see people get something that they probably would have never had."

"I was a little bit skeptical at first, like what's the catch, and since we were the first ones, it was trial and error," Ron said.

Because this is the first home the couple has owned, it was

like a new beginning for them. "To me this house represents hope, for myself, my wife, and for our family," Ron said. "It also represents closure on some old issues that were holding us back and keeping us down. It is the substance that you bring inside the house that makes it a home. This house here, I want to have a lot of substance for my family and whoever else walks through that door. This is exactly the size house that Sharon wanted. When she would dream about a house, she would describe this one, so to see her walk through it and smile, it makes me happy."

When asked about the experience of home buying Ron said, "I want people to be inspired, that maybe they can go out and take a chance on doing something like this. There are a lot of people who don't know about this program and who are interested in it. My wife and I are telling people by word of mouth."

"We're delighted to see the new neighbors in Rockwood and hope that Neighborhood Services Organization will be able to continue to put new scattered-site housing in the Weed and Seed area," said Oklahoma City's NSO Director Mike Randall.

Mary Ervin

October 5 was a memorable day for Mary Ervin and her five children. It culminated a 2-year process toward home ownership that resulted in Mary owning a four-bedroom home.

Mary's journey began with the Family Self-Sufficiency Program of the Oklahoma Housing Authority, which referred her to the Weed and Seed Project. Weed and Seed gathered some of their partner agencies such as



The Alexanders in front of their new home.

(continued on next page)



Left: U.S. Attorney Robert McCampbell with Mary Ervin. Below: Mary's new home.



(continued from previous page)
 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Community Action Agency, Oklahoma City, Habitat for Humanity, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), Consumer Credit Counseling, Latino Community Development, and Neighborhood Services Organization to help her.

"We all sat down with Mary to discuss her housing needs, what would be the best avenue for her," said Sherry Hunt of HUD. "Based on her situation, we decided Habitat would be the best solution."

In June 2001, Mary was approved for Habitat for Humanity, which organizes building homes and helps low-income families purchase homes. She worked a lot of hours at the renovation station and attended home buyer classes through NHS. The Weed and

Seed Housing Committee found a building lot for Mary in the Weed and Seed neighborhood and, when construction finally began, she was out there with her hammer and nails doing her part.

"When we first started, it seemed like a puzzle. It was amazing, everyone helping out," Mary said. People from Tinker Air Force Base, HUD, U.S. Secret Service, Oklahoma County District Attorney's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, Oklahoma City Police Department, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives volunteered to help build Mary's house.

"Working on the house was an exciting project for all of us, and we thank

Mary and Habitat for Humanity for giving us the opportunity," said U.S. Attorney Robert McCampbell. "Although it was humorous at times to see a group of lawyers trying to build something, in truth it was very satisfying to participate in making such a wonderful addition to the Weed and Seed neighborhood."

Mary sought assistance through the Community Action Agency for the downpayment and closing costs. When asked about plans for the future, Mary said, "having a nighttime childcare is in the plan for me. When we started this I had four goals: own my own home, get off assistance, have at least three of my kids be college material, and open my own childcare facility. I've already accomplished two of them."

Mary works as an Assistant in Management, Transportation Specialist, Trainer, and Teacher for La Petite Academy childcare. Her background in childcare will help her open her own facility and she says it is already named "Diamond's Night House" after her youngest child, Kapreasha Diamond.

**Stories adapted with permission from the author.*

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Your photos will be returned if you include a self-addressed envelope. Visit www.usdoj.gov/eows/insites.htm for more information on submitting your story to us. What's happening in your neighborhood?

We look forward to hearing from you!—Carol Neylan

Weed and Seed: Building Opportunities Through Culinary Arts

The city of Savannah, Georgia, actively encourages innovative revitalization efforts in its Weed and Seed neighborhood. One of the site's more unconventional activities provides training in the culinary arts through the Bread & Butter Café. The café is a partnership of Union Mission, a nonprofit organization that aids homeless people, Savannah Technical College, and America's Second Harvest Food Bank. Savannah's Weed and Seed initiative supports case management services for at-risk youth and adults who participate in the program.

What began as a training program in spring 2000 has evolved into a community kitchen and job training site. The café is also a fully operational restaurant that serves customers ranging from blue-collar workers to professionals to neighborhood residents. Students are taught classical French cuisine and are encouraged to create their own recipes.

Although the program was established for people who face multiple barriers to employment and who cannot succeed in a traditional school setting, it does not compromise the essentials of education. Students receive 15 weeks of instruction in customer service, work ethics, and food preparation before they receive 14 hours of credit from Savannah Technical College. This interactive, hands-on, culinary arts program stresses learning through basic cooking principles that prepare students for jobs or higher education. Students graduate with renewed energy and self-confidence.

Michael Wilson, the Program Supervisor, is excited about the project and the location of the café. He believes the café brings stability to the Weed and Seed neighborhood. "We (the partnership) determined, when the café opened, it would be in a district where it could bring some stability that might attract other businesses.

The location of the café on 719 East Broad Street was a strategic move in becoming an intricate part of the community," he said. The program and location encourage youth and adults to get involved in a skill that they might otherwise have overlooked.

Wilson, who used to teach at Savannah Technical College, has an MBA, was a member of the New York Stock Exchange, attended culinary school at Savannah Technical College, and is an ordained Catholic priest. He sees the café as a ministry and an opportunity to bring his business and theological backgrounds to the community kitchen. At the same time, the program allows him to indulge his love for the culinary arts and teaching.

Over the past 2 years, the program has seen significant increases in attendance, participation, student focus, and enthusiasm. It started with 4 students in Union Mission's community kitchen and this year graduated its largest single-session class, 17 students. In total, 123 students have graduated from the program, and approximately 79 percent have found stable employment.

One of the program's success stories is 19-year-old Ashley Morris. Since graduating, she has been employed for good wages at the Macaroni Grill, a new restaurant in Savannah. She



Michael Wilson at the entrance of the Bread & Butter Café.

credits the training she received at the café with enabling her to pass the pre-employment test. Morris is a staunch supporter of the café and thinks it is a great opportunity for underprivileged youth to get training. It gave her the confidence to pursue a future in the culinary arts.

The Bread & Butter Café has become a valuable resource and provides ideal employment for many students who are interested in becoming chefs or in developing their work ethic and other healthy life skills. The program welcomes all who may benefit from it, whether they are facing barriers to employment or are struggling with life's challenges. The Bread & Butter Café is working to transform lives in its Weed and Seed neighborhood. ■

Operation Clean Sweep and Weed and Seed Work To Clean Up Corpus Christi

Sgt. Henry Mangum, Corpus Christi, Texas, Police Department

At dawn, my patrol car led the convoy of vehicles down the quiet streets of our Weed and Seed area. Behind me, a camouflaged tractor rig pulled a matching lowboy trailer. On the trailer was a giant bulldozer with tank-like tracks for wheels. A city truck full of orange traffic cones brought up the rear.

We pulled up in front of our first dilapidated house and the National Guard soldiers assigned to our detail blocked off the road and unloaded the equipment. Most had been on an Operation Clean Sweep Mission before and knew the procedure. They staged the bulldozer and made a final check of the target house to make sure that all utility lines had been removed. They checked the spacing around the property. I did a final inspection inside the rundown house to make sure it was unoccupied and then turned it over to Sgt. Richard Tuttle.

Tuttle revved the engines of the Caterpillar bulldozer, drove forward, and began demolishing the rotting structure. The air filled with the sound of cracking wood and a musty odor. An opossum ran from under the house and a large rat jumped from the ripped-open attic. In 15 minutes, the two-bedroom dwelling was reduced to a pile of rubble that would be loaded into two 40-cubic-yard dumpsters and hauled to the city landfill.

While the debris was being loaded into the dumpsters, one of the guardsmen asked me for the story behind the house. I told him that it had been reported to me that neighbors were complaining about a constant flow of people in and out of the abandoned house. No one legally lived there and the grass surrounding it was always waist high. The structure was in a bad state of disrepair and had been deemed uninhabitable by city code enforcement officers.



Left: A bulldozer operated by a National Guard soldier demolishes a crackhouse. Below: A view inside a crackhouse, showing trash and the plastic bottles that have been used for huffing paint.

I took down the address and went to visit. The front of the house and most of its windows were boarded up. In the back, I noticed a well-worn path through the grass and found the back door open. Inside the house I

discovered that it was being used as a hideout for people using drugs. On the kitchen counter I found burnt matches, syringes, and bottle caps that had the telltale burnt marks that disclosed they were being used as cookers for cocaine and heroin. In the living room, among the trash and discarded clothing that littered the floor, I found several paint cans and empty plastic soda bottles painted gold on the inside. People were also hiding out here and abusing inhalants. Cigarette butts and a few condom wrappers lay alongside the quart bottles that seemed to be in every corner of the house. I realized I had another crackhouse with a confirmed drug nexus to put on my list.

The address was then passed to George Oresco, who works out of the code enforcement office at city hall and the house was marked for Operation Clean Sweep. Oresco did a title search and found that the resident of the



home had died several years ago. The house became the property of a son who lived in another city and who did not have the financial resources to care for it. The son signed off on the paperwork, allowing the National Guard to destroy the house, but maintained ownership of the property. The house was then checked for asbestos, its utilities were disconnected, it was photographed, and it was added to a list of 20 similar properties.

Oresco and I then proposed scheduling a Clean Sweep Mission to the board of Neighborhood Visions, Inc. Neighborhood Visions is a nonprofit organization that works to improve the quality of life in our community. It is a collaborative organization that pools finances and resources to support various programs. The board is made up of local industry and business leaders and concerned citizens. The city of Corpus Christi, the Corpus



A typical abandoned home that is constantly being broken into and used by transients, drug users, and prostitutes.

Christi Police Department, and our local Weed and Seed office are represented on the board. Operation Clean Sweep, begun in 1998, is Neighborhood Visions' primary program.

Once we had board approval, we contacted MSgt. Valerie Benner with the Counter Drug Support Program of the Texas National Guard. Together we set dates for a Clean Sweep Mission. We usually try to have no fewer than 18 addresses and plan for a 2-week mission. Benner plans the National Guard's part of the mission, which includes cutting orders for soldiers and arranging for their equipment and lodging. Before every mission, Benner visits us to ensure that all the required paperwork is in order and to tour the proposed demolition sites.

Corpus Christi has teamed with the National Guard to knock down close to 200 structures during 8 missions since 1998. This has saved our local taxpayers more than \$2.3 million.

The best part about a mission is the effect it has on the community. I have been involved in the last six missions and it still amazes me to witness the response from the community. Neighbors are always excited and happy to see their neighborhood eyesore being hauled off. When we're working in those areas we often see neighbors start cleaning up their own yards. People come out and talk to us and thank us. I remember one particular

house we were demolishing. A neighbor came out to see what was going on, watched our efforts, and walked away. He returned a little later with his lawn mower and began mowing his own knee-high grass.

The broken window theory says if you leave a window shattered it can bring down a whole neighborhood. This program illustrates the broken window theory in reverse. It motivates people to do their part

in making their community a better place.

Neighborhood Visions also tries to expand its antidrug efforts by

coordinating other events with the missions. It has sponsored antidrug poster contests at schools near the demolition sites, organized antidrug rallies, and distributed Operation Clean Sweep T-shirts to the children. We also often have the National Guard troops eat lunch at the school cafeteria with neighborhood kids, which is always a hit with both the soldiers and the children.

Operation Clean Sweep is a very valuable program for the citizens of Corpus Christi. It gives neighbors a means to slowly rebuild a street, which helps to rebuild a community. Will it solve our drug problems? No, it's just another front in the war on drugs. Does the program work? Yes, just ask the neighbors on one of the streets we've visited with our bulldozers. 🏠



"The Federal Bureau of Investigation Director's Award reflects the community of Corpus Christi's antidrug efforts. I'm humbled, and very thankful for each and every one of you who has contributed in part to assist me in receiving this special recognition. Standing united together makes all the difference in the lives of youth in our community. Thanks again for your support."

—George Hodge,
This year's recipient of the FBI Director's Award.
Coordinator, Weed and Seed, Corpus Christi

Fountain Square Neighborhood Helps Area Youth With Youth In Arts Projects

Cindy Cox, FACT Board Member

Indianapolis, Indiana, is reaping the benefits of a neighborhood restoration project completed last October on its southeast side near Fountain Square. For years, an ice cream store had been boarded up with plywood during the winter months until it reopened in the spring. In a highly visible and well-traveled location, the ice cream store looked like an abandoned building.

In response to numerous complaints from residents about the unsightly appearance of the store's winter look, a neighborhood group stepped in to turn this negative situation into a positive one. The Fountain Area Community Team (FACT) partnered with several area resources and the store's owner to create an attraction that benefited both the neighborhood and the partners.

With a neighborhood restoration grant through SUMO Weed and Seed, FACT contacted a local artist to offer a summer art class at the local Girls Inc. to create decorative boards to cover up the store during the winter. The owner of the business was excited about the idea and purchased new boards for the Youth In Arts 2002 mural project and replaced worn and damaged siding on the building to prepare for the display.

The artist designed the mural and did the initial painting on the boards. Then she started a weekly summer art class at Girls Inc. and worked with a number of the 8- to 13-year-old girls who not only spent a part of their summer learning art but also finished painting the boards. The artist donated her time and got a local paint store to donate the paint. Even the installation of the boards was done with donated labor.



Above: The ice cream parlor decorated with its new mural. Right: The artist/mentor and her students.



Area residents and visitors have had nothing but praise for the visual improvement the boards have made and for those who worked on them. In appreciation for their work, the store's owner treated the girls to a lunch and an ice cream treat when their summer art classes ended. The real treat for the girls was the pride they took in helping their Fountain Square community and knowing that they helped paint the mural they see when they pass by the ice cream store.

FACT retains ownership of the boards and will store and maintain them when they are not in use. A plaque mounted on the boards describes the project and the partnership among the store's owner, FACT, Girls Inc., and SUMO Weed and Seed. It has a picture of the artist with the girls in front of one of the boards that they were painting. The mural and its

plaque remind people that when they work together in the community good things can happen.

The mural is not the first community art project in Fountain Square and it will not be the last. A similar project was done in 2001, and the artist is eager to participate in another project in the southeast area in 2003. Fountain Square is an up-and-coming neighborhood in Indianapolis where many artists are taking up residence. Youth In Arts projects help to beautify the area, promote the artistic reputation of Fountain Square, and give the kids who participate in the projects a sense of pride in knowing that they were a part of something everyone can enjoy. 🏠

Weed and Seed Holds Sustainability Conference in Pittsburgh

John Tokarski, Office of the Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

Staying Alive, Staying Alive—How To Sustain Your Operation Weed and Seed Site” was the theme of a regional conference supported by the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, held November 17–19, 2002, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The opening plenary featured a general discussion between attendees and representatives from various foundations headquartered in Pittsburgh. The foundations represented national, local, public, and private funding sources. Their representatives addressed how to “meet and greet” funders, the expectations of funders on acceptance of Weed and Seed proposals, and how to build relationships between the funding community and Weed and Seed entities. This was followed by a discussion with various national programs about how their initiatives can be used by individual Weed and Seed sites. Insight was also given on how to encourage partnerships with institutions of higher education, regardless of their proximity to a site.

The afternoon was filled with a series of roundtable discussions centered on

the various components of Operation Weed and Seed, such as law enforcement, community policing, economic development, and neighborhood restoration, as well as intervention, prevention, and treatment. Rather than having speakers give presentations, the roundtables used group leaders with high levels of expertise in the areas under discussion. The success of this approach was measured by the active participation of attendees. The conference planning team had decided to hold roundtable discussions in this manner because of the wealth of knowledge about best practices already developed in the field by Weed and Seed participants.

Mary Beth Buchanan, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Elliot McLean, Special Counsel to the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and Denise Spang, Suburban Site Coordinator for Homestead, hosted a showcase reception at the Waterfront in Homestead, Pennsylvania. The Waterfront, an economic development/neighborhood restoration centerpiece located within

the Pittsburgh-Homestead Weed and Seed site is the former site of the USX Homestead Works steel mill. The mill is now a reclaimed “brownfield” that highlights a 125-acre, multimillion dollar entertainment, retail, and housing development. A presentation on the development was made by Continental Real Estate, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio.

The final morning was highlighted by a workshop on how sites can use already established Weed and Seed structures as conduits for homeland security readiness and overall crisis preparation approaches. The Pittsburgh Weed and Seed model was discussed; the various issues and individuals that needed to be addressed in constructing the model were noted. The conference concluded with an overview of the previous day’s discussions. Bob Samuels, Acting Director for the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, endorsed the approach of using the coordination mechanisms established by Weed and Seed to help communities advance their domestic preparedness efforts.

More than 300 participants from more than 20 States attended this eastern regional conference. Networking was facilitated by a reception, hosted by Pittsburgh Weed and Seed, featuring a retrodisco theme party appropriately titled “Staying Alive” and music was provided by local radio show personality Stephen Chatman, who also serves as the Pittsburgh Weed and Seed Assistant Coordinator. As one attendee put it, the meeting was transformed into “a good old time of sharing ideas with a whole bunch of people.” 🌱



Attendees participate in one of many roundtable discussions at Weed and Seed's regional conference in Pittsburgh.

Weed and Seed Partners With Police To Help Communities in Ohio

Ohio's Community Policing Strategy Award: Riverside North Neighborhood Association Block Patrol

The Riverside North Block Patrol consists of a core group of 8 to 12 volunteers who cover a multiblock area of the Riverside North neighborhood of Lima, Ohio. Each night, groups of at least four walkers contact the Lima Police Department and tell officers where they will be patrolling. Patrol members carry cellular phones and contact the police when they witness suspicious individuals or activities.

A project of the Riverside North Neighborhood Association, the Block Patrol began in 1996 as a result of chronic neighborhood violence that included five homicides over a 5-year period, drug dealing, gang activity, and quality-of-life issues such as loud music, gambling, and loitering. The project also grew out of a National Night Out event in August 1996 when 25 residents and 2 Lima police officers walked the neighborhood for more than 2 hours. Since then, more than 7,500 volunteer hours have been logged. Using funds from a small grant from the Lima Association of Women Realtors, an award from Dominion East Ohio Gas Company, and a Weed and Seed grant, the patrol



Members of the Riverside North Block Patrol receive the Grassroots Award from the Ohio Crime Prevention Association: Jim Weinman, Tom Lester, Bo Patten, Officer Mike Bean (Lima Police Department), Ruthie Mays, Alice Davenport, Phyllis West, Estella Adams, and David Adams.

has purchased 12 mag-light flashlights and 30 block patrol outfits.

Community partners in this grassroots initiative include the Lima Police Department, the city of Lima's Department of Community Development, Cappi's Pizzeria, and St. Rita's Medical Center. Before this program, Riverside North accounted for 20 percent of all calls for police services. By the end of the first year, the neighborhood's calls accounted for only 1 percent of the volume of police calls and in subsequent years calls have fluctuated between 1 and 4 percent of the city's total. Area residents say they feel safer since the patrol began and have more pride in their neighborhood. The Block Patrol has turned the Riverside North neighborhood around.

Ohio Crime Prevention Project and the Toledo Police: Problem-Oriented Policing at the Gold Star Market

In January 2001, the Toledo Police Department and the Lagrange Development Corporation set out to address a major concern in the Old Polish Village neighborhood: open-air drug sales in the vicinity of the Gold Star Market. The neighborhood had been chosen as a Weed and Seed site by the U.S. Department of Justice in November 2000 and provided with the extra financing needed to confront the problem.

During a problem-solving meeting between the police department and the Lagrange Development Corporation, the main problem was identified and a strategy for dealing with it was



Members of the Ohio Crime Prevention Project: Officer Terrence Lewis, Deputy Police Chief Derrick Diggs, Officer Joe Hefferman, Jennifer Wise (Director of Toledo-Lagrange Weed and Seed), Sgt. Carl Stachura, and Ron Staller (President of the Ohio Crime Prevention Association).

adopted. The essential problem was drug sellers using a parking lot as their place of business. This attracted drug users and other criminal activity into the neighborhood.

Using ideas and concepts obtained at several community policing seminars, it was decided that a surveillance camera would be used to record the drug activity. With visual evidence in hand, a meeting was set up with members from different city agencies and the police department. Managers from the Department of Neighborhoods and the Department of Inspections, along with the fire inspector and police officials, executed a detailed inspection of the property. Armed with ordinances, the police and inspectors began making their presence in the neighborhood felt.

Changes occurred immediately. Store owners who had previously shown indifference toward authorities became interested in helping to clean up the drug problems on their property. As local cooperation grew, loitering, drug sales, and crime in the area decreased and the Gold Star Market saw an increase in sales and profit. ■

Weed and Seed and DEFY Training in Orlando Set the Pace for 2003

Maryn Olson, Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow, Congressional Hunger Center, and Pat Gilbert, Consultant

The DEFY (Drug Education for Youth) and the Application Kit conferences were held consecutively in Orlando, Florida, March 3-7, 2003. The first day of the conference was devoted exclusively to DEFY with the Application Kit information covered in the concluding 3 days. Combining these two events was well received by attendees.

developing alternative resources to support DEFY programs. He identified three challenges: finding new partner organizations, locating suitable sites as alternatives to military bases to host DEFY camps, and securing funding sources to ensure continuation of the program.

Sessions addressed mentoring, the vital role it plays in DEFY, and how

From the opening ceremony through 2½ information-filled days, attendees were presented with an array of useful information. Presenters at the sessions included EOWS staff, Weed and Seed site leaders, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) personnel, representatives from other departments of government and supporting agencies, and technical assistance providers.

In the plenary sessions, new policies were presented and continuing requirements were revisited. Presentations by EOWS program managers provided a step-by-step explanation of the entire application process and the rationale behind the information required on applications.

At the Thursday, March 6, luncheon, special tribute was paid to Cheryl Driscoll, who is retiring after more than 30 years of outstanding service in DOJ's Office of Justice Programs. Cheryl has been very important to Weed and Seed sites over the years, always working quietly and efficiently to ensure their success. She will be sorely missed by everyone at EOWS and also by the sites across the country.

In small group sessions on Thursday afternoon, the special emphasis areas were covered by panels that included people operating programs in their sites and technical experts in each area of interest. With ample time for questions and discussions among attendees, these breakout sessions were very popular.

Several new initiatives of special interest were announced at the conference. The idea of benchmarks was introduced as a method of helping both sites and EOWS measure progress on a yearly basis. This benchmark information will be used to ensure that a

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Opening ceremonies of the Orlando conference.

DEFY has grown steadily over the past 10 years. The program now operates in 165 Weed and Seed sites and served 5,122 youth last year. Speaking at the opening of the conference, Bob Samuels, Acting Director for the Executive Office for Weed and Seed (EOWS), emphasized the importance of DEFY as a strong positive example of "seeding" activity. He reminded the coordinators of the need to carefully document the program's successes as a means of demonstrating its effectiveness.

Col. Gary Clawson, Army National Guard (Ret.), focused his remarks on

youth benefit from the mentoring relationships that develop through the program. Although it may take some time to identify a sufficient cadre of mentors, the selection of good personnel makes all the difference. Other topics presented at the workshops included risk management issues with an emphasis on liability concerns and reducing risks.

Orlando Weed and Seed partners hosted a reception at the end of the first day that brought everyone together to share ideas, discuss the events of the day, and get better acquainted.

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site is making progress in implementing its strategy. In addition, two new programwide efforts to measure site progress were introduced. Terry Dunworth, who led the National Impact Evaluation of Weed and Seed, asked sites to have their police departments provide data for a new analysis of incident-specific crimes. This is designed to provide sites with new tools as well as to show the effectiveness of the program nationally. Sites wishing to participate in this effort should contact Terry at tdunwort@ui.urban.org.

Jack O'Connell, who has done many site evaluations, discussed a different way to help sites track their key law enforcement and community policing initiatives. Sites wishing to participate in this effort should contact Jack at the Justice Research and Statistics Association via e-mail at WeedandSeed@jrja.org.

Another initiative is the development of a coordinator's training module that will be presented at the national conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 25-28, 2003. The development of this package acknowledges the importance of the coordinator's work and the need for strong support for the person in this position. This package will use state-of-the-art technology to provide access to



The Orlando Regimental Police and Fire Pipes and Drums.

various vital information for the coordinator's use.

There will also be a special training session for new coordinators (those in their positions 2 years or less) at the national conference. An onsite training session will be offered on May 28 for a limited number of participants. Those wanting to attend should act quickly and register on the EOWS Web site conference page.

Conference participants left Orlando with renewed enthusiasm. The opportunity to meet with colleagues is always a special occasion. It is not only an opportunity to share ideas and information but it is also fun to get together and renew friendships. The networking that occurs is often the most important part of a conference. 🏠

What Works

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Making the Connection: Feeding Contributes to Weeding and Seeding

Maryn Olson, Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow, Congressional Hunger Center,
on detail to EOWS

As you think about connecting food to your local Weed and Seed strategy, you may want to consider some potential funding sources that are listed below. They can augment your Weed and Seed grant funding and provide long-term program support.

Children need healthy food to learn, so it is critical that every child has access to the **National School Lunch Program** and the **Federal School Breakfast Program**. Find out if the schools serving your Weed and Seed community participate in these important programs. If not, work with the school food services director and your State Department of Education to bring these programs to your local schools. The **Special Milk Program** can serve children not reached by the meal programs. Call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Division at 703-305-2590 for information about these programs and visit www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm to find out who administers child nutrition programs in your State. Team Nutrition education materials are also available from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.

Are you considering summer programs at your Safe Haven but are unsure how to feed the kids? Have your program become a **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** site. You need a sponsor and a site; you can find your State's SFSP administrator at www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/contacts.html.

Do you have afterschool programs in your Weed and Seed community? The cost of snacks may be reimbursed through the **National School Lunch Program** if the afterschool program is located in a school, or through the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**. Licensed daycare programs also can qualify for meal reimbursements through CACFP. Contact your State child nutrition administrator through the link given above.

Explore community gardening, which can provide nutritious fresh foods while teaching skills, bringing community members together, and revitalizing abandoned space. You can connect with your State's community gardening coordinator at www.recusda.gov/food_security/scgc/. Another source of information is the American Community Gardening Association at <http://communitygarden.org>.

Don't forget about **Meals on Wheels** or congregate food programs for the elderly. You can find information at www.aoa.gov/nutrition. Elderly and disabled people may also be able to receive food through the **Commodity Supplemental Food Program**. Contact your State's social services office to find out how to apply.

Try to connect community members to the services they need. Pregnant women, infants, and children up to age 5 may be eligible for the **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children**. Families with incomes below 130 percent of the poverty level may qualify for the **Food Stamps Program**. Contact your State's local social services office to learn how to apply for these programs.

Many programs and resources are available to help people receive adequate nutrition. Connect your community to these resources, and see the difference! If you have questions, contact Maryn Olson, Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow, in the Executive Office for Weed and Seed at 202-616-1152 or e-mail olsonm@ojp.usdoj.gov. 🌱

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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Executive Office for Weed and Seed

Washington, DC 20531



Celebrating 10 Years of the DEFY Program

